DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 117 802 EA 007 858

TITLE	Pilot Study of Differentiated Staffing. Report to the California Legislature as Required by Chapter 966, Statutes of 1970.
INSTITUTION	California State Dept. of Education, Sacramento.
PUB DATE	75
NOTE	8p.
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Community Involvement; *Differentiated Staffs; Elementary Education; Individualized Instruction; Junior High Schools; *Pilot Projects; Staff Utilization
IDENTIFIERS	*California

ABSTRACT

Chapter 966, Statutes of 1970, authorized the Superintendent of Public Instruction to exempt no more than five school districts from existing statutory provisions establishing minimum class-size standards and reporting requirements. The purpose of the exemption was to enable selected districts to establish pilot programs using differentiated staffing patterns without loss of state funds. The five districts selected to begin the program in the 1971-72 school year were Cupertino Elementary, Fresno Unified, Newport-Mesa Unified, Ocean View Elementary, and San Jose Unified. San Jose requested to be dropped from the program in 1973 and was replaced by Monrovia Unified. Each district has submitted a report listing its objectives, describing its program and activities, and summarizing its results. Summary descriptions are presented in Appendix A of this report. Four basic objectives have been common to all five districts--to reduce the pupil-adult ratio by increasing the number of adults in the classroom, to individualize instruction to meet the unique educational needs of each child, to increase community involvement in the schools, and to increase the reading and mathematics achievement of students in participating schools. All five districts reported successful programs. (Author/IRT)

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Pilot Study of Differentiated Staffing

Report to the California Legislature
as Required by Chapter 966, Statutes of 1970

EA 007 858

CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION • Wilson Riles - Superintendent of Public Instruction • Sacramento, 1975

This document was published by the California State Department of Education, 721 Capitol Mall, Sacramento, CA 95814, and distributed under the provisions of the Library Distribution Act.

1975

Legislation Requiring This Report

CHAPTER 966

An act relating to the public schools.

[Approved by Governor September 14, 1970. Filed with Secretary of State September 14, 1970.]

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Upon the application of the governing board of an elementary or unified school district, the Superintendent of Public Instruction may exempt for five fiscal years from the minimum class size standards and reporting requirements prescribed by Section 17507 of the Education Code, not more than four of the elementary schools and one junior high school maintained by such district. The exemptions authorized by this act may not be made with respect to more than five school districts.

No exemption shall be renewed unless a full report and evaluation of the results of the pilot program has been presented to the Legislature and to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction determines that the results warrant an extension of the exemption. Any exemption may be extended for a period not to exceed five fiscal years.

SEC. 2. The certificated employees of a school which, pursuant to Section 1 of this act, has been granted an exemption from the minimum class size standards of Section 17507 of the Education Code, shall not be subject to the provisions of Section 13506 of the Education Code which require certificated employees to be classified on the salary schedule on the basis of uniform allowances for years of training and years of experience. In lieu of such classification, the governing board of the district may establish salary schedules pursuant to which the salaries of such certificated employees are determined by job specifications rather than training and experience.

SEC. 3. It is the intent and purpose of the Legislature in enacting this measure, to enable a limited number of school districts to establish pilot programs, using differentiated staffing patterns in the schools, without the consequent decrease in state support which would otherwise result.

SEC. 4. The Superintendent of Public Instruction shall render a progress report on the operation of this act to the Legislature no later than the fifth calendar day of the 1973 Regular Session and shall render a final report to the Legislature not later than the fifth calendar day of the 1975 Regular Session.

SUMMARY REPORT ON PILOT STUDY OF DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING
AS REQUIRED BY CHAPTER 966, STATUTES OF 1970

Chapter 966, Statutes of 1970, authorized the Superintendent of Public Instruction to exempt no more than five school districts from existing statutory provisions establishing minimum class size standards and reporting requirements. The purpose of the exemption was to enable selected districts to establish pilot programs using differentiated staffing patterns without loss of state funds. Districts selected to participate in this pilot program could use differentiated staffing patterns in no more than four elementary schools and one junior high school in the district. The Statute further required that reports be made to the Legislature during the 1973 and 1975 Regular Sessions. This summary of the pilot programs in operation is provided pursuant to this requirement.

The legislation also provided that initial exemptions would be granted for five fiscal years with the Superintendent of Public Instruction authorized to extend the exemptions for an additional five years. This school year is the fourth fiscal year of the initial exemptions. The State Department of Education has advised participating school districts that the initial five year exemption period will end at the end of the 1975-76 school year, and at that time, the results of the pilot program will be evaluated and that they will be considered for possible extension for the additional period.

Summary of the Pilot Programs on Differentiated Staffing

Several districts applied to participate in the differentiated staffing pilot program which was initiated in the 1971-72 school year. The five districts originally selected were Cupertino Elementary, Fresno Unified, Newport-Mesa Unified, Ocean View Elementary and San Jose Unified. San Jose Unified requested to be dropped from the pilot program in 1973 and was replaced by Monrovia Unified, which had ranked sixth among the original applicants.

Each district has submitted a report listing its objectives, describing its program and activities implemented in pursuit of the objectives, and summarizing its results. Summary descriptions of each of the pilots are presented in Appendix A of this report.

Each participating district planned its own program under the exemption and developed its own objectives to meet its individual needs. Four basic objectives have been common to all five districts. These are:

(1) To reduce the pupil-adult ratio by increasing the number of adults in the classroom.

(2) To individualize instruction to meet the unique educational needs of each child.

(3) To increase community involvement in the schools.

(4) To increase the reading and mathematics achievement of students in participating schools.

Certificated teachers, aides and community volunteers are being used by all five participating districts. Two of the districts, Cupertino and Ocean View, have used certificated teachers as team leaders, interns, associate and part-time teachers. The other districts have hired aides to assist their classroom teachers. In each case, the certificated teacher is responsible for planning the instructional program and assigning specific tasks to aides.

Evaluation and Conclusions

All five districts reported successful differentiated staffing programs. Among the achievements reported by participants were reduced pupil-adult ratios, greater individualization of instruction and improved classroom discipline. Significant achievement gains in reading and mathematics were experienced in Monrovia Unified whose participating school serves the lowest socio-economic group in the district. Achievement gains were also reported by the other districts.

Four of the five districts plan to continue participation in the pilot program during the 1975-76 school year. The fifth district, Monrovia Unified, has not requested to continue its exempt status because its differentiated staffing pattern is in an Early Childhood Education school and can be continued under those statutes.

The Department of Education intends to review the differentiated staffing pilot programs during 1975-76 in order to determine whether extensions will be granted or if legislation should be sought to provide exemptions for other schools and districts.

APPENDIX A
SUMMARY OF DIFFERENTIATED STAFFING PILOT PROGRAMS
AS REPORTED BY PARTICIPATING DISTRICTS

Cupertino

The project was carried on in four elementary and in one intermediate (junior high) school. The Cupertino Teachers Association opposed the initiation of the program but it finally began after certain compromises in the plan were made. Credentialed personnel (made up of lead teachers, intern teachers, and part-time teachers) were utilized. Aides (non-certificated personnel), both paid and volunteer, assisted in the classroom. Studies made as the program drew to a close showed that teachers aides, students and parents all felt that differentiated staffing was a success. Classroom discipline was much improved and the pupils made progress in basic skills that was considered satisfactory for youngsters of their ability. Third graders who had been in the project for three years made particularly good progress. It is desired that the pilot study be continued and expanded to other schools in the district.

Fresno

Fresno Unified piloted differentiated staffing in two elementary schools. The aides in one school were education majors who worked as volunteer aides for college credit from Pacific College. After their volunteer work, they were kept on as paid aides. Some then did student teaching at the school.

Throughout the planning process, the district worked closely with the Fresno Teachers Association which supported the program. Evaluation at the close of the study indicated that all groups involved had a favorable reaction toward the experiment. Achievement in basic skills was satisfactory but not extraordinary. It is desired that the pilot study be continued and expanded to other schools in the district.

Monrovia

In this district, the pilot study was initiated in only one school (Monroe). This school serves the lower socioeconomic group in Monrovia. The student body is noted for its mobility. The school had the reputation over the years of being the one in which achievement in basic skills was always far below that of other schools in the district. With the addition of paid and unpaid aides assisting lead teachers, "Monroe has developed a new academic image." Achievement in basic skills was beyond expectations. The new superintendent intends to continue all aspects of the program (except for paying an extra stipend to the lead teachers) as part of Monroe School's participation in Early Childhood Education. It is felt that no further waiver is needed in order to carry on all other facets.

Newport-Mesa

The program utilized paid and unpaid teacher aides assisting certificated teachers. Evaluation by the district showed that teachers, aides, pupils, and parents exhibited a high degree of support for the plan. Achievement in basic skills reached the level expected. It is desired that the program be continued and expanded to other schools in the district.

Ocean View

The pupils attending the participating schools had the advantage of certificated teachers being used in different roles as lead teachers, associate teachers, and part-time teachers, with all being supported by aides. The evaluation showed all groups involved, including parents and pupils, considered the program to be a great success. Achievement in skill development was up to expectations. It is desired that the program be continued and expanded.

The complete reports made by the districts are available from the State Department of Education.

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